

Information Security Culture: A survey in Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

Introduction:

Information security is a relevant fact for current organizations. There are factors inextricably linked to this issue, and one cannot talk about information security in an organization without addressing and understanding the information security culture of that institution. Maximizing the organizational culture within an organization will enable the safeguard of information security. For that, we need to understand which the inhibiting and the enabling factors are. This study contributes to point out those factors by presenting the results of a survey concerning information security culture in small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

Distribution:

Type de enterprise	N. of Workers	N. of enterprises	N. of enterprises surveyed	N. of enterprises with a security culture	%
Micro	1-9	329,730	100	2	2
Small	10-49	16,381	90	10	11
Medium sized	50-249	2,439	117	17	15

Among the 29 companies which have an information security culture, 2 are "Micro" enterprises; 10 are "Small" and 17 are "Medium sized".

Purpose of the study:

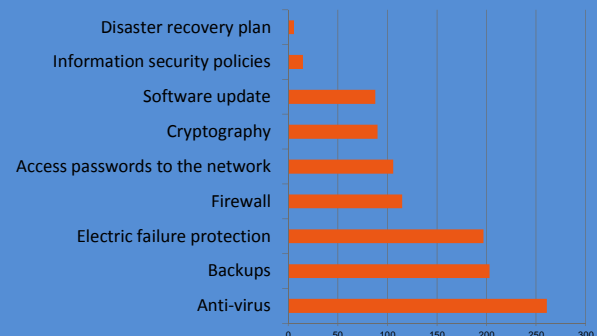
This study aims to identify the enabling or inhibiting factors for the adoption of an information security culture within SMEs in Portugal. By doing so, we intend to give our contribution so that SMEs may over time have their assets more safeguarded.

Research Methodology:

Survey

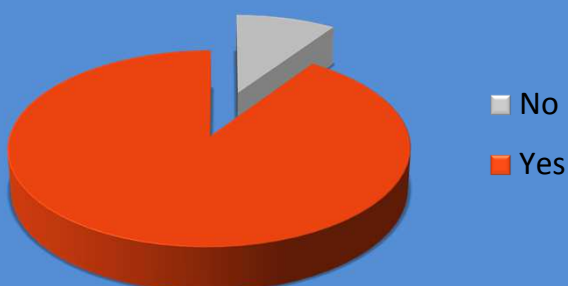
- 350 SME's (universe 348,552)
- 88% Response Rate
- 288 by phone and 19 by email (effective answer 307)
- Respondents: people in charge of IS

Adopted security measures:



Within the 29 companies which adopt an information security culture, the kinds of measure implemented are as presented in the chart below.

Adoption of an information security culture



Conclusion:

Each organization has a culture (or perhaps a set of subcultures) and such culture may have an effect on security. Understanding how this happens may provide insights on possible ways to change organizational cultures so that security is given higher priority.

We hope that this work can represent a positive contribution to SMEs. Although it is impossible to ensure that companies will be totally free of information security incidents, it is possible to make these companies more secure day by day.